

OLD ENOUGH TO DRIVE?

An illustration of a silver SUV. Inside the car, a man with short brown hair is in the driver's seat, smiling. In the back seat, a woman with dark hair and a young girl are looking out the window. A small brown and white dog is sitting in the back seat next to the girl. The car is parked on a road with a blue sky and clouds in the background.

In the U.S., a person must be:

- ♦ 17 to see a violent movie,
- ♦ 18 to vote in a state or federal election,
- ♦ and 21 to drink alcohol.

So, is a person ready to drive at 16?

Without a doubt, driving is a lot of fun, and a lot of American teenagers can't wait to get a driver's license. But driving a car at 60 mph* is also a big responsibility.

Tom Vega wants to get a driver's license. His family is talking about it.

Tom: I really want to get my license this year!

Mr. Vega: We know, but we're worried that you're not ready.

Liz: Of course he's ready, Dad! And when he gets his license, he can give me a ride to school every day. Cool!

Mrs. Vega: Look, driving is fun, but people also have to use caution and make important decisions when they are driving.

Tom: But without a driver's license, how am I going to learn to be a good driver?

Actually, parents are right to worry. Car accidents are the number one cause of teenage fatalities in the U.S.

* 60 mph – 60 miles per hour (96.5 km per hour)

LESSON 2

FYI

The Vega family finds a solution to their problem.

Mr. Vega: We know you need experience, son, but we want you to get it in a safe¹ way.

Mrs. Vega: There are some driving rules² that help teenagers just like you. We want to talk to you about them, Tom.

Tom: Really? Like what? I'll try anything.

Liz: I want to learn too!

Here are some examples of safe driving rules parents can give teens:

- ◆ Only one friend at a time can ride in the car (*to minimize distractions*).
- ◆ Be home by a specific time (*that parents decide on*).
- ◆ No driving on Friday and Saturday nights (*when accidents are frequent*).
- ◆ No phone calls or text messages when driving.
- ◆ Absolutely no drugs or alcohol.

When parents insist on simple but important rules like these, the number of teenage driving accidents can be reduced. After all, getting a driver's license is very exciting, but it's also a time to learn something new: how to be a confident, expert driver.

Now everybody's happy!

Tom: I agree to always respect these rules.

Mr. Vega: Then you can get your license.

Mrs. Vega: And I know you'll be an excellent driver.

Liz: Yay, Tom!

¹ safe — (adj.) without risk to a person's health

² rule — (noun) an official instruction

SMOOTHIES



Here's some interesting information about smoothies for you to read. You can listen to it too!

In the late 1960s, American ice cream vendors and health food stores began to sell a new drink called a smoothie. Today, smoothies are very popular in the U.S. People like them because they are a good option for a healthy snack, and they are also delicious on a hot summer's day.

Of course you can get a tasty smoothie in any flavor at most American coffee shops, shopping mall restaurants and even in stores, but a lot of people know that they don't have to leave their home to have a smoothie because they are so easy to make right in their own kitchen! If you've got fruit, juice and ice, then you have everything you need to make one too. Here are some of the most popular flavors in the U.S.

1. Green Apple
2. Banana
3. Strawberry
4. Peach
5. Coconut

6. Lime
7. Orange
8. Strawberry-Kiwi
9. Pineapple
10. Vanilla-Lime

